Into the Labyrinth

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Into the Labyrinth

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Summary

Three days was a long time for things to go sideways. For people to get hurt. For people to die. Will liked to believe he'd know if any of those closest to him had left the mortal coil. But the truth of mortality was far more stark and less fanciful. The harsh reality was that people died all the time and their loss was sometimes only ever felt as gently as a ripple disrupts a current of water.

Notes

Welcome to the Madness!!! We had every intention of posting this on the two year anniversary of Wings but life, as they say, happened. We were delayed a month but are SO excited to share this with you and start the journey into finally writing the sequel we've always wanted to write and that has lived rent free in our minds for over two years!

There is only one path for these guys: forward. Join us as we conclude the verse that started a lifelong friendship and amazing writing partnership!

Note: Tags will be updated as we post, however, all major tags have been included in this first chapter so people can choose whether they are comfortable reading. If you have questions about any of the tags or what shape they might take to help you feel comfortable, please reach out to us on Twitter!

Moonlight filtered in through the window, bone white and breathtaking even through the slightly drawn curtains. Will watched his mate, limned in starlight and just as achingly beautiful as the full moon outside, as he plugged his phone in to charge with shaking hands. It had died sometime during their - very unexpected - heat and rut and he was nervous.

They'd been out of it for days, *very important days*. It was Monday, which meant it had been three days already since their plan to get several of their friends out of the mess that was the Louisiana prison system had been scheduled to happen.

Three days was a long time for things to go sideways. For people to get hurt. For people to *die.* He liked to believe he'd know if any of those closest to him had left the mortal coil. But the truth of mortality was far more stark and less fanciful. The harsh reality was that people died all the time and their loss was sometimes only ever felt as gently as a ripple disrupts a current of water.

Will nibbled on his thumb anxiously, watching the play of shadows and light that made their way across Hannibal's body. He had a few more scars since they'd been home for the last six months, Will marking him up physically just as often as Hannibal marked him. Their bond marks still spilled in violent crimson against their necks, unable to leave them alone long enough to heal to a more traditionally faded silver.

Will groaned and Hannibal stirred awake, the shift immediate in his awareness. Hannibal's eyes locked onto him without effort, a predator totally at ease in his territory, knowing everything within it by sound and smell alone. Will felt himself slicken a little between his thighs, his heat still simmering just beneath his skin. The Alpha had a way of luring out Will's basest urges with frequent ease. Hannibal's muscles shifted effortlessly as he sat up in bed, leaning back against the headboard and beckoning Will wordlessly to return to him.

Will moved without thought, his body already in motion before he'd consciously considered it. He settled across Hannibal's lap, burying his face into the other man's neck and breathing him in deeply, scenting him with his cheek against Hannibal's chin at the same time.

They'd only shared two biannual Heats and Ruts since meeting; one in their old shared cell and this most recent one in the comfort of their home. And, while they'd been fearsome and wonderful and lovely to behold, Will would be lying if he didn't admit this experience had come at a horrible time. Even if a small voice in his hindbrain argued no time was ever a bad time to be taken by his mate.

They lingered in silence for several long moments, Will's eyes closing and his mind drifting for just a little while. Hannibal wouldn't ask him what was wrong, Will knew he could sense his frantic energy through their bond and would see it even without the bond telegraphing all of Will's innermost turmoil. Hell, he could probably scent it like a dog sniffing out disease.

"We picked a helluva time to fall, huh Icarus?" Will laughed hollowly, his eyes closing again briefly as Hannibal wrapped his hand around his nape, squeezing lightly in encouragement.

Will sighed, finally collapsing into the hold and leaning in to lick along Hannibal's bond mark. He hated letting himself feel weak like this, so wholly *Omegan,* but he needed Hannibal's unshakable calm right now. He accepted the placating gratefully. "I'm worried. Our phones are dead. What if one of the crew got hurt? What if the entire fuckin' mission was a failure?"

Will didn't need to specify. His concern for Francis, for Randall, for Beverly and even Matthew who had a part to play in the escape was a palpable thing. He also didn't need to address the even more disconcerting notion they could all be *dead.*

"Darling," Hannibal began, but Will didn't let him finish, capturing his lips with his own to stop him from needing to lie to Will to placate him. There wasn't room between them for falsities, whether they were considered a kindness or not. Will couldn't bear to have Hannibal made a liar if things did go badly. Especially after they'd crafted their entire bond on the foundation of their candor.

Will knew the stakes. He'd known them from the moment he'd decided to follow Hannibal into the unknown outside the prison walls. When he'd left everything he'd ever had behind but had known all along he'd never be able to leave it for good. He might not want the business anymore but he *needed* his people, and he'd die before he'd let any of them rot alone and separated from him.

Hannibal didn't try to stop Will's advances, instead letting himself be pushed back against their sweat and come tacky bedsheets, Will straddling him and keeping him pinned down.

Will wasn't in Heat anymore but he felt frantic, needy, the lingering thrum of energy and arousal still simmering just beneath the surface, made all the more unbearable by his intrusive thoughts. Images splashed across the backs of his eyelids like flashbacks. His people — his *pack* — covered in blood. Eyes forever closed. Minds forever gone from him. He couldn't bear it. Didn't know if he'd survive it.

He had been so achingly alone when he'd first gone to prison. He'd been a big fish in a small pond but he'd been without his crew. Randall had proven his dedication by getting himself arrested and imprisoned along with Will. His relationship with Matty had grown and evolved and now Will knew he could trust him to reside firmly in his inner circle -- *another person to lose.* All of them people who'd looked to him for leadership, who *trusted him* to keep them safe.

Thinking of Francis nearly brought a sob to Will's throat, barely contained as he leaned down to press feverish, nearly violent kisses to Hannibal's mouth. He couldn't lose Francis. Losing him would be like losing a limb, the Alpha had always been such a soothing presence in Will's life.

He could feel himself spiraling fast. He needed a distraction, needed to not think anymore until he could actually *do* something.

Will would have loved nothing more than to sink back down onto his mate, take him deep and urge their bodies as close as physically possible. But his Heat-exhausted body protested every movement, and the last thing Will wanted was to flood their bond with his physical

discomfort along with the panic that was vibrating through him like an overly tightened guitar string.

There was another way they could be close, though. A way that Will could erase the distance and bury the panic as he slipped into the ever familiar role of calm and control; the role that had been his short adult life until Hannibal had walked into it. He knew the panic would surge again with cruel swiftness as soon as the peak of pleasure was met, but that was a problem for future Will.

In that moment, all Will could focus on was desperately clinging to the intimate bubble he and his mate had been trapped in for the last few days. The outside world could wait ten more minutes while his phone charged a sliver of enough life to boot up. For ten more minutes he would be Hannibal's, and Hannibal would be his, and everyone he knew and loved would be alive and well and life would be perfect. Just ten more minutes.

“Wanna fuck your throat, baby. Can I do that?” The words felt thick in his mouth, pulling out more of his drawl along with his anxiety. Over the months they’d been together in Baltimore Will’s accent had faded, adapting to his new location and the new faces in his life. But the ghost of it still lingered on the edges of his elongated vowels, his clipped consonants that rolled into one another like warm honey from his tongue.

Hannibal had always been attracted to Will’s every facet, and his accent was no different. The Alpha’s eyes drew inky black, the same color as blackholes Will imagined, dangerous in their gleaming arousal. “Of course, my heart. Whatever you want.”

Still so prim and proper, even on the cusp of their shared Heat and Rut and with Will slicking obviously in his lap. Will would truly love ruffling those perfectly coiffed feathers, even if only briefly.

His cock was already twitching with interest, thickening quickly at the thought of being buried in the warm, slick channel of his mate’s throat. Hannibal would take him completely, without trouble or complaint; allow Will to slide in and carve out a space all his own and afterwards thank him for the opportunity.

What a magnificent Alpha he’d found himself. Not at all like any other he’d known in his life. Sure, there were a few in his inner circle that had proven themselves loyal friends, more family than even his own blood, but no one on earth was as dedicated to him as Hannibal was.

His fingers drifted down and back up Hannibal’s chest, dancing and tangling in the coarse hair that covered it with coy movements until his palms met broad shoulders and he pressed down against the solid weight of his mate for leverage enough to shift his body up until he was straddling the Alpha’s upper torso. He could feel every muscle of Hannibal that was tensed beneath him, between his thighs, could see the silent concern splashed across his features even as he gazed adoringly up at Will.

“I’ll be okay,” Will assured him, one hand stroking the stubble that had grown out on Hannibal’s chin over the course of their mating as the other pushed the loose hair that

covered his forehead. “I need it all to be okay, just for a bit longer,” he admitted in a soft murmur.

Hannibal’s stern countenance melted at that, the thin line of his lips twitching once with no doubt the urge to argue the fact before he made the conscious effort to settle and relaxed completely into the nest beneath him. He brought his hands up to pet tenderly at Will’s hips and thighs, head tilted up in offering. Will took his stiffening length in hand, pulling the foreskin back to reveal the glistening head as he shifted his hips forward to guide it the last bit of distance to his lover’s mouth.

The Alpha’s lips parted slightly with his released breath as he gazed up at Will with hooded eyes. The warm air puffed over Will’s cock just as he dragged it lightly over Hannibal’s plush mouth and Will shivered at the sensation, amazed at the arousal burning and clenching in his stomach after just coming off a Heat where he was so thoroughly satisfied. He spent several long seconds merely smearing his precome against Hannibal’s lips, until his Alpha could wait no longer for a taste and darted his tongue out to swipe at them, grazing over the weeping slit of Will’s head in the process.

Will ignored the choked noise that escaped his throat, but chased the wet heat of Hannibal’s tongue as it slipped back into his mouth. He used the thumb of his free hand to guide the Alpha’s jaw open and pressed in with one smooth roll of his hips, releasing his approval of his lover’s pliancy on a low groan as he sank deeper. He grit his teeth against the urge to buck forcefully, wanting this experience to be pleasant for his mate. He stilled when he’d buried himself completely, threading fingers soothingly through Hannibal’s hair as the Alpha peered up at him through watery eyes.

“Just perfect,” Will grit out on a hiss. He took a trembling breath as he reluctantly pulled back, immediately regretting the loss until he was pushing forward again. “You’ve always been so perfect for me, baby. So ready and willing for anything I’d give ya.” More slick slipped from him as Hannibal gave a contented hum around his cock in response. Will flashed the Alpha a wicked grin as he bottomed out once more and remained there. “‘Member when we did this in the chemical room during laundry detail? Price came in to see what was takin’ us so long and caught quite a show. Don’t think he was able to look ya in the eye for ‘bout a week after.”

Hannibal growled around the intrusion in his throat at the memory, visceral and calling to his Alpha to *take*. “My big, strong Alpha on his knees for me, desperate and drooling with your massive knot hanging out of your prison scrubs while you rut against my foot like a beast. You’re just *so* good for me, make me so happy, darlin’.” Will thrust forward, Hannibal’s eyes growing dark as brimstone and promising retribution. For as good as Hannibal was for Will, Will was equally good for Hannibal.

When the situation called for it.

He reached forward to wrap his fingers lazily in Hannibal’s hair, still sleep-mussed and slick with sweat. Will could scent the lingering spice of Hannibal’s Rut in the air, a siren call begging him to submit. To bare his throat and let the Alpha at his neck and between his thighs.

But it was *Hannibal* between Will's thighs now, Will exuding the easy control over the Alpha he'd developed over years of needing to be strong in a world often pitted against him. When you were batting all zeroes with the lot you were cast in life, you sometimes had to learn that the bat itself could be a damn good equalizer when applied to someone's kneecaps.

"That's it, Alpha, sucking me so well." Will purred, letting his palm come to rest on Hannibal's cheek, soothing as well as sinful; the desire to feel himself inside Hannibal's mouth from the *outside,* too overwhelming to ignore. The Alpha accommodated him perfectly, his lack of a gag reflex usually a blessing but today Will *wanted* to hear his sounds, wanted the man drooling and gagging and soaked with Will's need, his release painted in pearlescent white across sun kissed cheeks and a wet, tempting tongue.

Two quick taps to Will's thigh had him pulling out immediately but gently. It was one of their wordless signals, and he honored it like he would the most sacred of oaths.

Hannibal cleared his throat, looking every bit undisturbed and totally in control even though his pink lips were swollen and bruised-plum red already from the friction. He pinned Will with his gaze, swirling whiskey and a slumbering monster staring into Will's core. "You're holding back, darling boy. I want you vicious and snarling for me as I've been for you the last several days. Take what you need, Will, and don't worry about my comfort. I can take it." He smirked, smug and brazen up at Will, and Will growled a low, warning sound deep in his throat.

"Don't tempt me, *darling,"* He mocked, admonishment in his voice but with no real heat behind it. Truthfully he *wanted* to take what was rightfully his to take. Hannibal's enjoyment of the matter was naught to him in this moment.

"I'll take what's mine and then some, Hannibal. Don't you worry your little Alpha head, baby." He grinned down at the other man, bone-white teeth shining in the low light, flashing like a warning sign before he was using his fingers to pry Hannibal's jaw apart. "Open up."

He didn't wait for compliance, simply forced his fingers wider and held Hannibal's mouth open while he slipped back inside, not stopping until he felt the pressure of Hannibal's throat constricting around him as he fought back his gag reflex. He paused for several seconds, letting himself get used to the sensation and watching as Hannibal's eyes flickered black as ink pots before being completely taken over by Alpha red.

Will ground back against him to feel how hard the Alpha was between his thighs and then shifted forward, splitting Hannibal's throat apart as he drove deeper inside him, feeling the hot clench of him around his shaft. He loved him like this, pliant and desperate but no less feral for it. He loved knowing even though the Alpha *could* overpower him and shift the dynamic at any moment that he *wouldn't.* Because of his sheer desire to see Will's every whim fulfilled, no matter how fickle; or how cruel.

"That's it, baby. No one's ever fucked you so good, have they? Slutty little throat but it's all for me, right?" Hannibal tried to nod his agreement but Will moved serpent fast to wrap his palm around the Alpha's throat, holding him still and in place while also allowing him to feel himself through the thin barrier of skin, spearing so deep into his lover it made his toes curl and his stomach heavy with arousal.

“Gonna come inside you baby, mark you up from the inside out. Do you like that?” Will asked rhetorically, his grip on Hannibal enough to keep the man from answering even if he’d wanted to, especially with his throat clogged as it was.

Will counted out the seconds, tapping a steady cadence against the side of Hannibal’s neck as he kept his throat plugged and his airways blocked. After twenty seconds he released and pulled out temporarily, followed by a gasping rush of air as Hannibal pulled oxygen back into his burning lungs. Will gave him only a few seconds to do so before he was inside him again, his cock twitching in the tight, enclosed space, nestled comfortably in Hannibal’s esophagus.

Hannibal was *so good,* the words not all just part of their play. Will truly meant it, the Alpha was so still and pliant for Will, keeping his hands at his sides with his claws in the sheets to avoid touching Will without permission. Will couldn’t hold back anymore, already dangerously on the precipice of coming. As much as he wanted to make it last forever, keep them suspended in this moment in time for the rest of their lives, he knew he needed to come soon, to get this rush out of his system so he could recalibrate and focus on doing what needed to be done.

He started up a brutal pace with no warning, releasing his grip on Hannibal’s throat so he could place them on the wall behind the bed instead, giving himself the leverage he needed to start truly fucking Hannibal’s throat. His thrusts were nearly violent; claiming. He took what was his without guilt or concern. It wasn’t as though Hannibal wasn’t enjoying himself, Will could smell his arousal and feel the heat of his cock behind him even now.

Will’s hips thrust against Hannibal’s mouth and chin with enough force to bruise, and already Will ached to lick lazily at the pretty sepia marks he knew would appear. His orgasm hit him hard and fast, knocking the air from his lungs in a broken gasp as he spilled deep into Hannibal’s throat, only barely managing to pull out quickly enough to paint his teeth and tongue and lips.

He collapsed forward, one hand coming down to the mattress beside Hannibal’s head and the other moving to push into Hannibal’s swollen mouth, lips warm to the touch as he pushed his come past them and spread it out over Hannibal’s pink tongue, the Alpha practically purring as his Omega marked him so thoroughly.

“Good boy, Icarus. Never fail to make me fly, make me see stars.” He praised, leaning down to lick along Hannibal’s teeth and share the taste with him. His body finally grew heavy and lax with his post-orgasm haze, and he rolled over until he was curled against Hannibal’s side, wrapping his arms around his heaving chest as he still worked to collect himself and return air to his deprived lungs.

Will nuzzled against his throat, his scent strongest there and now covered in a layer of *Will.* He liked it best when they smelled perfectly combined on one another’s skin, deeper even than skin or blood or bones. Their very souls were made of the same stuff, Will knew it down to his toes.

Hannibal pulled Will more firmly into his side, his arm an iron bar around Will’s body. He never failed to make Will feel so safe, which was a novel enough feeling for Will since he’d grown up having to make *himself* feel safe and not being able to steadily rely on others. He’d

always been a bit prickly and stubborn, he knew, but Hannibal brought out a softer side of him. Allowed him the space to be comfortable in his Omegan nature.

Will let his eyes close for a few seconds but woke up with a start several minutes later, heart in his throat as he leapt to his feet. He scrambled around to the other side of the bed, seeing the homescreen for his phone finally shining brightly as it had turned back on.

Before he could reach for it, the phone rang, the sound shrill and disruptive. Both a welcome interruption and carrying with it a terrifying finality. Once he picked up he'd know. He'd have his answers.

"Will -" Hannibal began, plucking up the phone from the table but hesitating to offer it just yet.

"Don't, Hannibal. Don't lie to me and tell me it's all going to be okay when we don't *know anything.* Give me the phone, darlin'. Please." He wasn't pleading, he knew Hannibal would ultimately cave, needing answers just as badly as Will did even if it was for more selfish reasons. Hannibal wanted to know so he could prepare for how best to take care of Will. Will *needed* to know so he could figure out how to take care of *everyone.*

As he predicted, Hannibal handed the phone gently over into Will's waiting palm, a small moue of discontent pulling his slim lips down. He glanced down, seeing Beverly's number on the screen.

He found he couldn't speak when he answered the phone, lungs aching to carry air to him as he tried to steady his breathing, control the shake developing again in his hands.

"Will? Hello?" Francis' concerned voice broke Will and he let out a sob of relief, collapsing into Hannibal's arms right as the Alpha reached for him, calming him with large palms running along his flanks, cupping his nape and teasing against his bond mark.

"I'm here." Will assured, hearing an equally strong sigh of relief from the other end of the line. Will hadn't even considered they'd all be beside themselves with worry when Will hadn't been there, hadn't answered for *days* if they *had* made it.

"Was worried about you, pup. Don't do that to me again, I'm not as young as I used to be." Will let out a broken, gasping laugh, watery and desperate.

"Noted. What the fuck is going on? Is everyone there with you?" He couldn't bear to ask if everyone was *alive,* but he knew Francis understood what he was truly asking.

"Everyone and then some, I'd say." Francis confirmed, voice resorting back to his usual gruff, no-nonsense cadence. It was only then, now that the panicked rhythm of his heart was slowing in his ears and things were quiet between them that he heard commotion on the other end of the line.

"What do you mean, Francis? What's that noise?" Francis didn't seem concerned so Will kept himself calm even as the sounds grew louder, moving closer. He leaned heavily into

Hannibal's body, the Alpha immediately closing his arms around his mate and dragging them both back to the bed where he could hold him close.

"Let me speak to him. That's an *order."* That voice, so familiar, a sound he'd thought lost to him except in his darkest dreams and most terrifying nightmares.

And then Will could hear the phone was being snatched from Francis, the Alpha letting out a grunt of disapproval. "Will? Is that really you?"

It felt like cold rain water spilled down his spine, his mind going thick as cotton fluff. He barely realized he'd opened his mouth before a single, solitary word was spilling past his lips.

"Mama?"

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